

Message Text

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ACTION SS-30

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FM AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

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INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN IMMEDIATE

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EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, MOPS, IS, US, XF

SUBJECT: CONVERSATION WITH DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER ALLON

REF: BEIRUT 12333

1. PRIOR TO MY MEETING WITH MRS MEIR TODAY, I HAD ABOUT THIRTY MINUTES WITH DEPRIMIN ALLON IN CABINET ROOM ADJOINING PM'S OFFICE.

2. ALLON DESCRIBED SITUATION IN SOUTH ALONG LINES ALREADY REPORTED WITH EMPHASIS ON FACT THAT ISRAEL HAD NOT TAKEN INITIATIVE TO VIOLATE CEASEFIRE. HE REITERATED GOI POSITION THAT EGYPTIANS INITATED MASSIVE VIOLATION OF CEASEFIRE TODAY IN ORDER MAKE SUPREME - AND HOPEFULLY LAST - EFFORT BREAK IDF SEIGE OF THIRD ARMY. HE NOTED HOW TEMPTING IT WOULD BE FOR ISRAEL TO GIVE IDF THE 3-5 MORE DAYS REQUIRED ALONG SUEZ FRONT TO WIN A MILITARY VICTORY OVER EGYPT OF TRULY ASTOUNDING PROPORTIONS - THE DESTRUCTION OF THE ENTIRE EGYPTIAN ARMY. WHEN ONE RECALLS WHAT THE MILITARY SITUATION WAS IN SOUTH WHEN FIGHTING BEGAN, SUCH A

MILITARY ACHIEVEMENT WOULD BE EVEN MORE REMARKABLE. DESPITE THE TEMPTATION, HOWEVER, HE STATED THAT THE GOI MEANT IT WHEN IT
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TOLK THE PRESIDENT AND SECRETARY ISRAEL ACCEPTED THE CEASEFIRE. ISRAEL HAS NOT AND WILL NOT, THEREFORE, TAKE THE INITIATIVE TO VIOLATE THE CEASEFIRE ON THE SOUTHERN FRONT OR ANYWHERE ELSE.

3. REFERRING TO THE TEMPTATION IN PURELY MILITARY TERMS TO FINISH OFF THE EGYPTIAN ARMY, ALLON SAID THAT HE RECOGNIZED THIS PROBABLY WAS THE WRONG THING TO DO FROM POINT OF VIEW OF ANY HOPE FOR PEACE IN THE AREA THROUGH NEGOTIATIONS. IN THIS RESPECT, HE NOTED IT WAS PROBABLY A GOOD THING EGYPTIANS COULD STILL CLAIM SOME SEMBLANCE OF VICTORY IN HAVING CROSSED THE CANAL AND, AT LEAST IN SOME PLACES, STAYED THERE AND ALL THIS IMPLIED FOR EGYPTIAN PRIDE AND HONOR.

4. ALLON THEN TURNED TO THE NORTHERN FRONT POINTING OUT IT WAS TOTALLY QUIET, "NOT A SINGLE SHOT." HE NOTED THIS SHOULD BE CONVINCING

EVIDENCE THAT ISRAEL ONLY SHOOTS BACK WHEN SOMEONE ELSE VIOLATES THE CEASEFIRE AND SHOOTS FIRST.

5. ALLON DESCRIBED IN SOME DETAIL THE CAPTURE OF MT. HERMON, NOTING THAT BY CAPTURING THE LAST SYRIAN HELD POST ISRAEL HAD TOTAL CONTROL OF THIS MOST STRATEGIC POSITION. IN THIS RESPECT HE ALSO NOTED THE CAPTURED SYRIAN POSITION IS ASTRIDE THE "ARAFAT TRAIL," A FAVORITE INFILTRATION ROUTE OF THE FEDAYEEN FROM LEBANON TO ISRAEL.

6. ALLON THEN EXPANDED ON THE SUBJECT OF THE PROBLEM OF THE FEDAYEEN BY STATING "AS YOU KNOW, WE ARE TAKING CARE OF YOUR FRIENDS AS WELL," MAKING CLEAR HE WAS REFERRING TO GOI DECISION TO ABSTAIN FROM ATTACKS ON JORDAN OR RETALIATION AGAINST THE FEDAYEEN IN LEBANON. HE THEN EXPLAINED THAT ON BEHALF OF MRS. MEIR HE WAS RECEIVING THE DELEGATIONS OF CIVILIANS FROM THE ISRAELI SETTLEMENTS IN THE NORTH THAT ARE UNDER ATTACK BY THE FEDAYEEN. IT IS BECOMING INCREASINGLY DIFFICULT FOR THE GOI TO TELL THESE PEOPLE WHY THE IDF IS NOT PROTECTING THEM, PARTICULARLY NOW THAT EVEN SYRIA HAS ACCEPTED THE CEASEFIRE. HE EMPHASIZED THAT GOI ACTIONS AGAINST THE FEDAYEEN TO DATE HAVE BEEN CONFINED TO AMBUSHES AND OTHER ACTIONS TOTALLY ON ISRAELI SOIL. ISRAEL, HE NOTED, UNDERSTOOD THE DILEMMA. LEBANON CLAIMS IT IS TOO WEAK TO CONTROL THE FEDAYEEN; ISRAEL COULD VERY EASILY CONTROL THEM BY SENDING A NUMBER OF SMALL UNITS INTO SOUTHERN LEBANON. THIS, OF
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COURSE, WOULD CREATE ANOTHER POLITICAL CRISIS WHICH ISRAEL SINCERELY WISHES TO AVOID. HE STRESSED THAT HE HOPED THE LEBANESE HAD BY NOW LEARNED THE SIGNIFICANCE OF MRS. MEIR'S WORDS AND BY THIS HE MEANT THE REFERENCE TO THE FEDAYEEN IN HER REMARKS TO THE KNESSET YESTERDAY. THIS, HE STRESSED, WAS A CLEAR WARNING THAT THE LEBANESE HAD TO ACT OR THE GOI WOULD BE FORCED TO BY DOMESTIC PRESSURES.

7. I TOOK THIS OCCASION TO SUMMARIZE THE MANY EFFORTS WE HAVE MADE WITH THE GOL, STRESSING AMBASSADOR BUFFUM'S LATEST HIGH LEVEL CONVERSATIONS IN BEIRUT, DRAWING LIBERALLY ON BEIRUT'S 12333. ALLON WAS PARTICULARLY IMPRESSED BY THE INFORMATION THAT PRESIDENT FRANGI HAD CONVOKED THE LEBANESE MILITARY WITHIN THE PAST FEW

DAYS AND HE SAID "I HOPE THIS WILL PRODUCE THE REQUIRED RESULT."
I TOLD HIM THAT WE ARE NOT, OF COURSE, IN A POSITION TO GUARANTEE
ANYTHING BUT IT SEEMED CLEAR LEBANESE WERE TRYING AND UNDERSTOOD
THE CEASEFIRE WAS A PARTICULARLY IMPORTANT NEW ELEMENT IN SITUATION.
WE WOULD, HOWEVER, MAKE SURE GOL UNDERSTOOD SIGNIFICANCE OF
MRS. MEIR'S COMMENTS BEFORE KNESSET.

8. AMBASSADOR BUFFUN IS PERFECTLY FREE TO DRAW ON RELEVANT
PORTIONS OF THIS TELEGRAM IN CONVERSATIONS WITH GOL ON PROBLEM
OF NECESSITY CONTROL FEDAYEEN.
KEATING

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